Snapping Turtle

RANGE IN IOWA
- Statewide

FUN FACTS
- Extremely aggressive on land
- Will often try to swim away when confronted in water
- Iowa's largest turtle species
- Unlike most of Iowa's aquatic turtles, male snapping turtles grow larger than females
- Will often bury itself in the mud of shallow waters, with only its head poking out
- Hunts for food in the evening and at night
- Cannot swallow on land; must find and eat its food in the water

APPEARANCE
- Brown, olive gray, or black upper shell (carapace) 9 to 14 inches in length in adults
- Strong jaw with a hooked beak, strong claws, and a long, saw-toothed tail

STATUS
- LEGAL to take with a valid Iowa fishing license.

HABITAT
- Wherever permanent water exists, including in lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, marshes, and ditches

DIET
- Omnivorous diet of water plants and anything they can catch